

Unit 2



Self-management Skills

INTRODUCTION

Self-management, which is also referred to as 'self-control', is the ability to control one's emotions, thoughts and behaviour effectively in different situations. This includes motivating oneself, and working towards achieving personal and academic goals.

Students with strong self-management skills are better at doing certain things well, such as coming to class on time, paying attention, obeying teachers, parents and elders, working with discipline, etc. It helps a person to do better in studies or work. In order to do well at work and life, in general, one must be able to manage and improve oneself in various skills, including timeliness, discipline, problem solving and work habits. To manage oneself well, a person needs to develop the following.

- Positive thinking: to think that one can get things done and be happy.
- Result orientation: to dream big and achieve the desired or set results.
- Self-awareness: to be aware of one's personality traits and make the best out of one's strengths.

SESSION 1: MOTIVATION AND POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Motivation and positive thinking can help us overcome fears and take up new challenges. Similarly, optimism, which is a mental attitude, reflecting a belief or hope,

can lead to positive and desirable outcomes. It helps us to achieve our dreams, continue working hard towards achieving success and live a happy life with a positive mindset.

“Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.”

— Helen Keller

Motivation

Motivation is derived from the word ‘motive’. Thus, directing behaviour towards certain motive or goal is the essence of motivation. An individual’s motivation may come from within (intrinsic motivation) or be inspired by others or events (extrinsic motivation).

Intrinsic motivation

It includes activities for which there is no apparent reward but one derives enjoyment and satisfaction in doing them. It occurs when people are internally motivated to do something because it brings them pleasure. They think it is important or feel what they are learning is significant. Incentives related to the motive or goal can satisfy one’s needs.

Extrinsic motivation

It arises because of incentives or external rewards. Lack of motivation or incentives may lead to frustration, for example, employees who are kept on contractual basis for a long time may get frustrated and leave an organisation.

Positive attitude

A positive attitude makes a person happier, and helps build and maintain relationships. It even increases one’s chances of success. In addition, it can help the person make better decisions. People, who maintain a positive or optimistic attitude in life situations and challenges, are able to move forward than those with a negative attitude. Positive attitude helps improve mental and physical health.

Ways to maintain positive attitude

It can take a little time and effort to build a positive attitude (Figure 2.1). Following are some ways that can help one maintain a positive attitude.



- Start the day with a morning routine. Say positive affirmations, smile often and think about the tasks to be accomplished during for the day.
- Feed the mind with positivity, read motivating books, listen to music with uplifting lyrics, watch inspiring movies, etc.
- Be proactive. A proactive person decides how one must feel regardless of what may be going around or what the day may bring.
- Focus on constructive and positive things. Do not approach life with 'problems'. Approach it with 'solutions'.
- Learn from failures. Think what could have been better and work towards the goals.
- Learn to focus on the present. Negativity mostly stems out from anxiety of the past and future events.
- Move towards your goals and dreams. Be cheerful and work hard to achieve the dreams.



Figure 2.1: Positive attitude

Here are some more techniques that can help you to maintain a positive outlook in the long run.

- **Physical exercise and fresh air:** Following a healthy lifestyle is essential for students. Practising yoga, meditation and deep breathing exercises help improve blood circulation and relax the body. Taking a walk or playing in the park helps one to get a lot of fresh air, which helps in becoming more active.
- **Healthy diet:** A healthy and balanced diet is important for a healthy body and mind. Eating a balanced diet, such as *daal*, *roti*, green vegetables and fruits provides the strength required to do daily work efficiently.
- **Organise academic life:** By keeping class notes organised, completing assignments on time and keeping track of all deadlines, stress can be reduced to a great extent. When you are not stressed, you can channelise your mind to achieve the goals.

- **Adequate sleep:** A good night sleep for at least seven hours is important so that the mind and body can get recharged to function better the next day.
- **Holidays with family and friends:** Visiting a relative's place, such as grandparents' house or a new place during summer vacation can help one break the monotonous normal routine and come back refreshed.

Positive attitude is of immense value in a student's life. There are various situations that the student will encounter in life, wherein staying positive will keep the child going. The most common example would be during exam results. At times, a student does not get the desired result in exams. But it is important not to lose hope, accept the result gracefully and work harder with a positive attitude for the next exam.

Even during an interview for a dream job, a candidate may not get selected in the first attempt. However, with a positive attitude and persistent efforts, all dreams can be achieved. Thus, it becomes imperative for a child to learn to practise positive attitude in life at all times.

What is stress and how to manage it?

Stress is a state of feeling upset, annoyed and hopeless. There are times when we feel nothing is working right, we are not able to achieve our goals and feel hopeless. During such times, if we manage and control our emotions, it helps us to sail through. Some of the ways to manage stress are given below.

- Stay positive and analyse what is going wrong in a certain situation. Resolving the situation is easy once understood.
- Maintain an accomplishment sheet and enter even small achievements.
- Keep your thoughts in present. Pondering over past issues makes us feel upset and helpless.
- Talk to friends and family for comfort.
- Practise meditation and yoga.
- Whenever you feel negative thoughts are taking over, take a look at your accomplishment sheet.



Figure 2.2: Stress

By managing stress effectively and maintaining a positive attitude, one can overcome any challenge and achieve heights in career. Managing stress effectively helps one maintain a healthy work–life balance.

Practical Exercise

The teacher will facilitate these activities by showing you the e-learning module for this lesson via http://www.psscive.ac.in/Employability_Skills.html. The module will include videos and e-content for the above topics, as well as, detailed instructions for some activities given below.

Activity 1

Role-play

Avoiding stressful situation

Material required

Pen or pencil, notepad or sheets of paper, etc.

Procedure

- Form groups of three Choose any one scenario from below.
Situation 1: You have missed your school bus and are getting late. What will you do? Will you panic or call for help or try to find a way?
Situation 2: You have to perform your best in a cricket match so that you get a chance to play for your school at the national level. You have been anxious (worried or stressed). Will you lose your sleep worrying about it or go to the field and practice?
- Prepare a skit and perform within your groups. Two members will perform the skit and one member will observe and share the feedback.

Activity 2

Self-reflection

Material required

Pen or pencil, etc.

Procedure

- Complete the table given below by listing situation(s) that cause negative thinking, for example, not performing well in an exam. List how you can manage the situations.

Situations causing negative thinking	How to turn around for positivity

Check Your Progress

A. Short answer questions

1. Describe the ways you can make positive thinking a habit in life.
2. List the importance of positive thinking. Describe how it can help someone achieve one's goals.

What have you learnt?

After completing this Session, you will be able to:

- explain the meaning of motivation.
- describe the type of motives.
- differentiate between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.
- describe the meaning of positive attitude.
- identify the steps for being positive in life.

SESSION 2: RESULT ORIENTATION

Result orientation is a term used to describe a person's ability to recognise what results are important and the steps needed to be taken to achieve them. It means to focus on the result of an assigned task. If you know the result you want to achieve, you can focus on the efforts required to achieve it. Hence, result orientation describes an individual or organisation that focusses on outcome rather than the process that has been used to produce a product or deliver a service.

An ideal employee needs to be proactive and result driven. The person must always take necessary steps to achieve the set goals or targets.

How to become result oriented?

(i) Set clear goals: Setting clear and accurate goals is the first step one needs to take to meet the targets.

(ii) Prepare an action plan: An action plan describes the way a person or an organisation will meet the set objectives. It gives a detail of the steps to be taken to achieve the target. Therefore, it consists of several actions or steps that need to be taken, and changes that need to be made. Each action, step or change should include the following information.

- **What** changes will occur after the actions?
 - **Who** will carry out the changes?
 - **When** will the changes take place?
 - **How long** will the changes stay?
 - **What resources** are needed to carry out the changes?
 - **Who should** know and what should be communicated?
- (iii) **Use the right resources and tools:** One must evaluate the resources and tools needed to achieve those results and whether they are available. For example, you may want to clear the college entrance exam with 70 per cent marks. Do you have the books to study for the exam? If not, from where and how can you get them?
- (iv) **Communicate with mentors and peers:** One must talk to teachers, seniors and mentors for help in setting realistic goals.
- (v) **Make a calendar:** One must make a calendar to monitor the progress at regular intervals.
- (vi) **Work hard:** One must work hard and believe in one's dreams.

Goal setting

Goal setting helps us to understand what we want, how to achieve it and how do we measure our success. Writing a goal requires that we should understand its purpose and objective. Let us try to understand how to define a goal.

- Identify what the goal is about, for example, customer satisfaction, speeding up the delivery process, etc.
- How the goal would make a difference? For example, will it enhance customer satisfaction, will it result in an increase in demand of a product or service, speed up the delivery process and result in better loyalty and quality of the product.

Use the acronym SMART to set goals. Let us see what each letter in SMART implies.

- **S: Specific**

Goals should be stated in specific terms. Vague goals are difficult to attain. Specific goals give us a concrete target. Hence, a goal should have a specific purpose.

- **M: Measurable**

Goals should always be measurable. If we do not set our goals in measurable terms, it is difficult to assess whether we have achieved them or not.

- **A: Action-oriented**

Goals do not just come true on their own. Effective goal setting should include action-based steps that one will follow to achieve the goal.

- Actions that I am already taking towards achieving this goal
- Actions that I am not currently taking but will take towards achieving this goal
- Actions that I am not currently taking and need help to achieve the goal
- People and places from whom I can get help to achieve the goal

- **R: Realistic**

There are few things more damaging to our sense of self-efficacy than setting ourselves up for failure. Goals must always be realistically attainable.

- **T: Timely**

Goals must have deadlines. However, deadlines may change. But one must always set a deadline to get the job done within a specified time limit.

Examples of result-oriented goals

Examples of result-oriented goals are as follows.

- A student may set a goal of scoring **high marks** in an exam.
- An athlete may run **five miles** a day.
- A traveller may try to reach a destination city within **three hours**.

Practical Exercise

NOTES

The teacher will facilitate these activities by showing you the e-learning lesson at http://www.psscive.ac.in/Employability_Skills.html. This will include videos and e-content for the above topics, as well as, detailed instructions for the activity given below.

Activity 1

Pair and Share

Aim in life

Material required

Pen or pencil, notepad, etc.

Procedure

- Form pairs of students.
- Make a list of things that you can do well.
- Write your aim in life.
- Share your notes with your partner and discuss your personal characteristics.
- One student volunteers and reads out the notes before the class.

Here is the format to do the activity.

- List what you believe you are as a person by starting the sentence with 'I am'.
- Next, list what you can do well by starting the sentence with 'I can' (I can sing well).
- List what you plan to do by starting the sentence with 'I will' (I will train myself in classical music).
- Finally, state your aim in life. Start the sentence with 'My aim is' (My aim is to become a singer).
- Making a list will help you to become self-aware and result oriented.

Check Your Progress

1. Fill in the table given below, which can help you to prepare an action plan to achieve the set results.

Results I want to achieve	What am I doing for achieving the results?	What should I do to achieve the results?
I want to score 80 per cent in quarterly exam.	I study for two hours daily.	I should study for three hours and practise sample test papers.

What have you learnt?

After completing this Session, you will be able to:

- identify ways to be result oriented.
- make an action plan.

SESSION 3: SELF-AWARENESS

Self-awareness is about understanding one's own needs, desires, habits, traits, behaviours and feelings. Let us try to understand this with a short story.

"A monk slowly walks along a road when he hears a galloping horse. He turns around to see a man riding the horse moving in his direction. When the man comes closer, the monk asks, "Where are you going?" To which the man replies, "I don't know, ask the horse" and rides away.

When we are not aware of ourselves, then we tread in a direction about which we are not clear. Therefore, it is important that we must be aware of ourselves. When one becomes self-aware, the person starts to become aware of everything and looks at things or situations objectively. It plays a critical role in how we understand ourselves and relate to others and the world around us.

Steps towards self-awareness

- The first step for practising self-awareness is gaining a greater awareness of one's emotions (Figure 2.3).



Figure 2.3: Various emotions a person experiences

- The second step to practising self-awareness is making a habit of tracking one's feelings.

- The third step for practising self-awareness is expanding one's practice to areas of life beyond the person's feelings.

Personality and personality traits

Personality is a cluster of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that make a person unique and different from others.

Personality traits are defined as relatively lasting patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that distinguish individuals from one another. Hence, personality development is the development of an organised pattern of behaviours and attitudes that makes a person distinctive. Personality development occurs by the ongoing interaction of temperament, character and environment. Culture also plays an important role in shaping personalities.

One's personality also affects the person's relationships with others. A positive personality can lead to better performance, increased productivity and cordial relationships with others.

There are five parameters that describe an individual's personality. These five dimensions are also called the 'Big Five Factors' and the model is referred to as the 'Five Factor Model', which is abbreviated as FFM (Figure 2.4).

- **Openness:** Individuals with openness to experience are, generally, creative, curious, active, flexible and adventurous. If a person is interested in learning new things, meeting new people and making friends, and likes visiting new places, the person can be called open-minded.
- **Conscientiousness:** Individuals, who listen to their conscience, are self-disciplined, do their work on time, take care of others before themselves and care about others' feelings.
- **Extraversion:** Extroverts are individuals, who love interacting with people around and are, generally, talkative. A person, who can easily make friends and make any gathering lively, is confident and an extrovert.

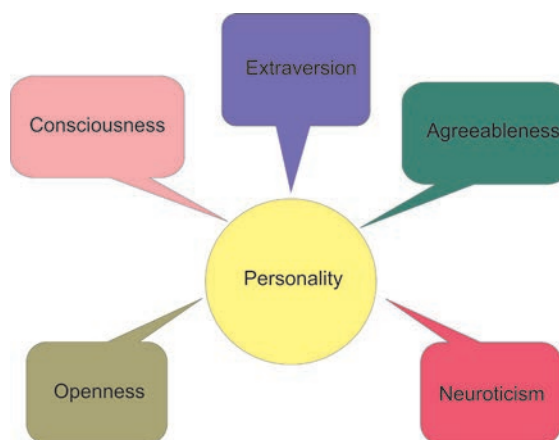


Figure 2.4: The 'Big Five Factors' or Five Factor Model

- **Agreeableness:** Individuals having such a trait are, generally, kind, sympathetic, cooperative, warm and considerate. They accommodate themselves in any situation. For example, people who help and take care of others are, generally, agreeable.
- **Neuroticism:** Neuroticism is a trait, wherein, individuals show tendency towards anxiety, self-doubt, depression, shyness and other similar negative feelings. People, who have difficulty in meeting others and worry too much about things, show signs of neuroticism.

Common personality disorders

Personality disorders involve long-term patterns of thoughts and behaviour that are unhealthy and rigid. A personality disorder is a way of thinking, feeling and behaving that deviates from worldly expectations and causes distress, which lasts over time.

Cluster A: Suspicious

People falling under this cluster always mistrust others and are suspicious, even when there is no need to do so. For example, Varsha is a homemaker. A maid has been working at her house for two years. Despite having CCTV cameras installed at home, Varsha is always suspicious about the maid. She follows her all the time and keeps a tab on her movements. This causes stress between Varsha and her maid.

- **Paranoid personality disorder:** Paranoid personality disorder is characterised by distrust for others, including friends, family members and partners. People with such a disorder mostly hold grudges against others.
- **Schizoid personality disorder:** The term 'schizoid' refers to the natural tendency to direct attention toward one's inner life away from the external world. A person with schizoid personality disorder is detached and aloof, and prone to introspection and fantasy. The person shows little interest in forming personal relationships and seems to be emotionally cold.
- **Schizotypal personality disorder:** People with this type of personality disorder believe that they can influence other people or events with their thoughts. They often misinterpret behaviours. This causes them to have inappropriate emotional responses. They may consistently avoid having intimate relationships.

Cluster B: Emotional and impulsive

This personality disorder is characterised by unstable moods and behaviours, which lead to unhealthy and unstable relationships, emotional instability and feeling of worthlessness. For example, Sunny is a student in a high school. Whenever he gets low marks, he is depressed and fights with his friends. He, also, does not try to learn from mistakes. His parents and teachers have tried talking with him but he feels angry, worthless and shouts at them.

- **Antisocial personality disorder:** People with antisocial personality disorder disregard social rules and obligations. They are irritating and aggressive, and act impulsively. They tend to lack guilt and fail to learn from experience. They may lie, steal or abuse, and may also get addicted to alcohol or drugs.
- **Borderline personality disorder:** People with borderline personality disorder essentially lack a sense of self-worth, and thus, experience feelings of emptiness and fears of abandonment. There is a

pattern of emotional instability, violent outbursts and impulsive behaviour. Suicidal threats and acts of self harm are common in people with such a personality disorder. They may have difficulty in dealing with stressful events.

- **Histrionic personality disorder:** People with histrionic personality disorder frequently try to gain more attention by being overly dramatic. They are extremely sensitive to criticism or disapproval, and can be easily influenced by others.
- **Narcissistic personality disorder:** People with narcissistic personality disorder believe that they are more important than others. They lack empathy for other people and tend to exaggerate their own achievements.

Cluster C: Anxious

This personality disorder is characterised by feelings of worry, anxiety or fear, which have the potential to affect one's daily routine. For example, Shikha is an elderly woman. She stays with her family. She has a habit of washing her hands at least 20 times a day. Even after washing her hands, she feels they are not clean, and continues rubbing or washing them. She neither talks to her grandchildren, nor does she participate in any family activity.

- **Avoidant personality disorder:** People with this type of disorder are socially inept, unappealing or inferior, and constantly fear being embarrassed, criticised or rejected. They avoid meeting others and often experience feelings of inadequacy, inferiority or unattractiveness.
- **Dependent personality disorder:** People with such a disorder are characterised by lack of self-confidence and an extra need to be looked after. They need a lot of help in making everyday decisions and surrender important life decisions to the care of others. They are heavily dependent on other people for their emotional and physical needs, and thus, usually, avoid being alone.

- **Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder:** People with such a disorder strongly stick to rules and regulations. They can be characterised by a general pattern of excessive concern with orderliness, perfectionism and attention to details. They feel extremely uncomfortable when unable to achieve perfection. They may even neglect personal relationships to focus on making a project perfect.

Steps to overcome personality disorders

- Talk to someone. Most often, it helps to share your feelings.
- Look after your physical health. A healthy body can help you maintain a healthy mind.
- Build confidence in your ability to handle difficult situations.
- Engage in hobbies, such as music, dance and painting. These have a therapeutic effect.
- Stay positive by choosing words like ‘challenges’ instead of ‘problems’.

Practical Exercise

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Activity 1

Group discussion

Self-awareness

Material required

Pen or pencil, notepad, chart paper, etc.

Procedure

- Form groups of three.
- Choose any one of the following situations and write down the personality disorders associated with these.
 - Kapil studies in a school. He disregards the rules set by the school, is irritable and does not talk much with either friends or family.
 - Jaya has been feeling fearful and empty for the last few days. She even tried to harm herself. What kind of personality disorder is this? How can you help her?

Check Your Progress

A. Multiple choice questions

Read the questions carefully and put a tick mark against the correct option.

1. Which of the following is not a parameter to describe an individual's personality?
 - (a) Self-confidence
 - (b) Openness
 - (c) Neuroticism
 - (d) Agreeableness
2. Which of the following is characterised by an extreme feeling of self importance?
 - (a) Narcissistic personality disorder
 - (b) Borderline personality disorder
 - (c) Dependent personality disorder
 - (d) None of the above
3. Ravi has feelings of emptiness, abandonment and suicide. What type of personality disorder is this?
 - (a) Borderline
 - (b) Dependent
 - (c) Avoidant
 - (d) Obsessive
4. Mona is helping her sister to overcome a personality disorder. What should she do?
 - (a) Talk to her sister
 - (b) Engage her in hobbies
 - (c) Help her build confidence
 - (d) All of the above

What have you learnt?

After completing this Session, you will be able to

- explain the meaning of personality.
- describe basic personality traits.
- describe common personality disorders.